



CATHOLIC EDUCATION  
Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn

2023 *Year in Review*





# Acknowledgement of Country

For Aboriginal peoples, Country is a word for all the values, places, resources, stories and cultural obligations associated with an area and its features.

Aboriginal people talk about Country the same way that they would talk about a person; they speak to Country, sing to Country, visit Country, worry about Country, feel sorry for Country and long for Country.

Aboriginal people say that Country knows, hears, smells, takes notice, takes care, is sorry or happy.

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners on whose land our Office and Schools stand today.

We pay our respect to their Elders past, present and emerging and also to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

**Left:** Artwork courtesy of Selina Walker.

**Cover:** Students Ruby Paton and Jessica Galvin, with Classroom Support Assistant Sarah Holland, driver Kathy Salmon and horse Digby recreating the arrival of the Sisters of St Joseph's during St Mary's Primary School Batlow's 100th anniversary celebrations on 23 October 2023. Photo courtesy of Murray Farrell from Bearcub Group.





St John Vianney's Primary School, Waramanga

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“ In annual surveys of our students, over 90 per cent tell us that they love their schools. ”

In February 2023 the Catholic Education Commission held its annual strategy day. Broadly, on that day, the Commissioners and senior staff of Catholic Education Canberra Goulburn considered the themes of Flourishing, Governance, Evidence and Mission. The day was successful – not necessarily because of anything learned or shared that day but because, when considering the agendas of the Commission's meetings throughout 2023 and the work of the Commission on behalf of the Archdiocese and its school communities, these four themes are woven through the year.

The actual work of Catholic education is all about human flourishing. St Thomas Aquinas argued that proceeding from our understanding of the goodness of God, human flourishing is the highest development of life and therefore of morality. For this reason, Catholic education and Catholic schools exist fundamentally to promote flourishing among the people and communities we serve, especially the children entrusted to our care.

Governance is related to this because it is the moral obligation of our leaders and of bodies like the Catholic Education Commission to ensure that our structures, processes and operations are aligned to the purpose of achieving flourishing.

The challenge throughout 2023 has been to investigate what we are doing in these areas now and to ask ourselves whether we are doing well. Is it the case that we are governing an entity that is enabling schools and their students to flourish? What can we do better?

We live in an era of 'evidence-based practice' where everything is tested, measured and assessed. The positive side of this is about accountability: are we achieving our goals? Are school communities flourishing?

Are students flourishing? Do we have the right measures in place to actually assess this? NAPLAN results and ATARs are useful indicators of certain things, but they do not necessarily tell us about the attainment of our goal. How, then, do we measure flourishing?

Finally, during the year we have addressed questions of mission: what do we do that contributes to our goal of flourishing? What is clear to the Commission is that our schools and our students are providing welcoming communities; that the students of Catholic schools are more likely to engage in practical social justice; and that they are more likely to pray about and reflect on their lives.

In annual surveys of our students, over 90 per cent tell us that they love their schools. It is not a scientific measure, but I suspect that it is a better measure of flourishing when 90 per cent of students across 56 schools all say the same thing about their school communities than a simplistic reading of academic results.

Of course the academic results are crucial; but they are not everything, whereas human flourishing is everything because, as Aquinas noted, it derives from the very sense of the goodness of God.

This is the reason many choose a Catholic education for their children; it is why our staff choose Catholic education as the place to work; it is why students in our schools love them.

The Catholic Education Commission seeks to keep this in mind in all that it does throughout the year.

**Chair, Catholic Education Commission (June 2023)**  
**Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn**



Merici College, Braddon





**I**t gives me great pleasure to present the Catholic Education Canberra Goulburn (CECG) 2023 Year in Review.

Our emphasis this year was on developing our new Faith in Learning strategic direction to clearly define our vision and purpose amid an intense contest around the purpose of schooling.

Through our Faith in Learning strategic direction, we aim to bring to life the work of our school leaders, teachers and support staff. We can only be the education system that we aspire to be if we get both faith and learning right. One does not come at the expense of the other. This means nurturing and growing both saints and scholars in our school communities.

For our school staff, this means we aim to offer the best place to work, to grow and develop, and to be formed in the Catholic faith. We can achieve this because of the great teachers and school leaders that we already have.

For our Year 12 graduates, this means helping them to develop high aspirations through their experience of great learning in our classrooms. Our graduates should be great human beings who know where to find wisdom in a complex world through their Catholic faith, our Catholic intellectual tradition, and Catholic social teaching.

It's our job to authentically bring together faith and learning for our students – to genuinely have faith in learning and learning in faith. This is the Catholic education that our students deserve.

It was a privilege to start 2023 with our Faith in Learning System Day gathering in Canberra in January. On this day, about 2200 of our teaching staff gathered under one roof for professional development with world-class educators. The national and international experts who supported us on this day

represented what I believe was the best professional learning available to teachers in Australia in 2023.

It was the first time in six years that we had all come together as an Archdiocesan education community. Since we last met, we have achieved record enrolments as well as significant growth in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student numbers, and more students with disability. This indicates we are living up to our welcoming and inclusive mission to meet the needs of every child who wants to enrol in one of our schools.

This year we truly started to see in our system something unique to Australia and uncommon across the world – achieving true equality of opportunity for the students in our care through a consistent approach to evidence-based teaching and learning across all our schools.

This has attracted significant attention from the news media. Noel Pearson's System Day presentation with his endorsement about the way we are transforming our teaching and learning significantly boosted interest in our work.

In June, the news media reported on an Equity Economics report that pointed to our Catalyst teaching and learning initiative as a reform that had significantly improved reading outcomes in our schools.

In July, we were again in the media spotlight through ABC TV when a major review of initial teacher education in our universities recommended wide-sweeping changes, including training teachers in explicit instruction and high-impact teaching practice.

In August, local and national media reported on our NAPLAN results, which showed we have reduced the number of students well below or below average in reading compared to students in the rest of Australia.

For a deeper dive into Catalyst, I launched in June a podcast, Teacher Insights from Catalyst. This has fostered teacher-to-teacher connections across our system and drawn in educators who want to know more about evidence-based teaching.

The conversations with teachers about our changing practice have deepened our knowledge of evidence-based teaching and of its impact on student learning. Thanks to the Catalyst Team and Luke Mooney from St Thomas the Apostle Primary School in Kambah for this great initiative.

“ We are living up to our welcoming and inclusive mission to meet the needs of every child who wants to enrol in one of our schools. ”

We have recruited a record number of early career teachers, which shows remarkable growth in interest from young teachers in the professional development we offer. In a time of national teacher shortage, our offering has us well positioned to recruit our future leaders.

This year we had big growth in two of our New South Wales schools with the first Year 11 cohorts

at St Anne's Central School in Temora and McAuley Catholic Central School in Tumut – a development made possible by virtual learning. I've listened to the experiences of the teachers and students involved in the uptake of virtual learning courses. This innovation is meeting a big educational need and taking us forward as a system. It offers career development for teachers, and it is keeping students in our local communities, which is important for communities in New South Wales.

In August, we started construction of the St Francis of Assisi Early Learning Centre at Calwell. It is due to open in May 2024 to meet demand for early childhood places in Canberra's south. Our early learning centres are physical and social environments to support children in learning and create a smooth transition to primary school. Enrolments came in quickly with a big response from parents whose children were on waiting lists for other preschool facilities.

We aim to be the best education system in Australia, if not the world, and I give thanks for the many blessings we have received to help us on our journey.

Our successes in 2023 give us much to build on and I look forward to the challenges of bringing together our faith and our learning to be a Catholic education system that is worthy of the name.

**Director, Catholic Education Canberra Goulburn**







## Our Purpose

To be faith filled Catholic learning communities of hope, joy and wonder where all are welcome and inspired to grow to their potential.

## Our Vision

Jesus Christ, our greatest teacher, calls us to share and witness to our faith, build inclusive communities and deliver contemporary quality learning opportunities for every person.

## Our schools at a glance

Catholic Education Canberra and Goulburn (CECG) is the approved system authority for ACT Catholic schools and is the operator of Catholic schools in the NSW sector of the Archdiocese.

Catholic Schools NSW is the approved system authority for NSW schools. CECG services Catholic schools in the Archdiocese, with oversight from the Catholic Education Commission.

CECG serves 56 schools plus 3 congregational schools and eight early learning centres, extending from Pambula on the south coast, to Crookwell in the north, through to Lake Cargelligo in the west, traversing 88,000 square kilometres and spanning the ACT and NSW borders.

We are the only Catholic education system in Australia that operates across both a state and a territory jurisdiction.

Our early learning centres and our primary, central and secondary schools and colleges throughout NSW and the ACT are integrated at a regional and Archdiocesan level.

This enables cohesive service delivery and strengthens relationships that improve outcomes for students.



**59** schools in ACT and NSW, including 3 congregational schools



**8** early learning centres



**26,643** students



**1554** full-time equivalent teachers



**511** full-time equivalent support staff



**900** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students



**5348** students with disability



## Our ACT schools at a glance



**19,623** total ACT enrolments



**8** early learning centres  
**636** ELC students



**24** primary schools  
**8,849** primary students



**5** secondary colleges  
**6,015** secondary students



**3** congregational schools  
**4,123** congregational school students



**423** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students



**3,669** students with disability



**1,000** full-time equivalent teachers



**325** full-time equivalent support staff

## Our NSW schools at a glance



**27** total schools  
**7,020** total students



**1** K-12 school  
**715** students



**4** K-10 central schools  
**1,373** students



**3** 7-12 secondary schools  
**1,567** students



**19** primary schools  
**3,365** students



**554** full-time equivalent teachers



**186** full-time equivalent support staff







# Catholic Education Commission

Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn

## Introduction

The Catholic Education Commission, as a ministry of the Church of the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn, is committed to authentic Catholic education centred in God's love for each person, as revealed in Jesus Christ.

The Archbishop is responsible for the oversight of all Catholic schools within the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn.

The Catholic Education Commission was established to support and advise the Archbishop in his responsibilities for Catholic schools in the Archdiocese.

The Commission advises and makes recommendations to the Archbishop but does not make decisions.

The Commission is not an incorporated body.

## Membership and terms of reference

The Archbishop of Canberra and Goulburn is the President of the Catholic Education Commission.

All members are appointed by the Archbishop for a four-year term with an option for a further four years by invitation of the Archbishop.

The Archbishop appoints a Chair as an ex-officio member of the Commission.

Members are drawn from key stakeholder groups in the Archdiocese including:

- Clergy
- Parents (NSW/ACT)
- Principals (NSW/ACT and primary/secondary and congregational)
- Catholic agencies
- Australian Catholic University

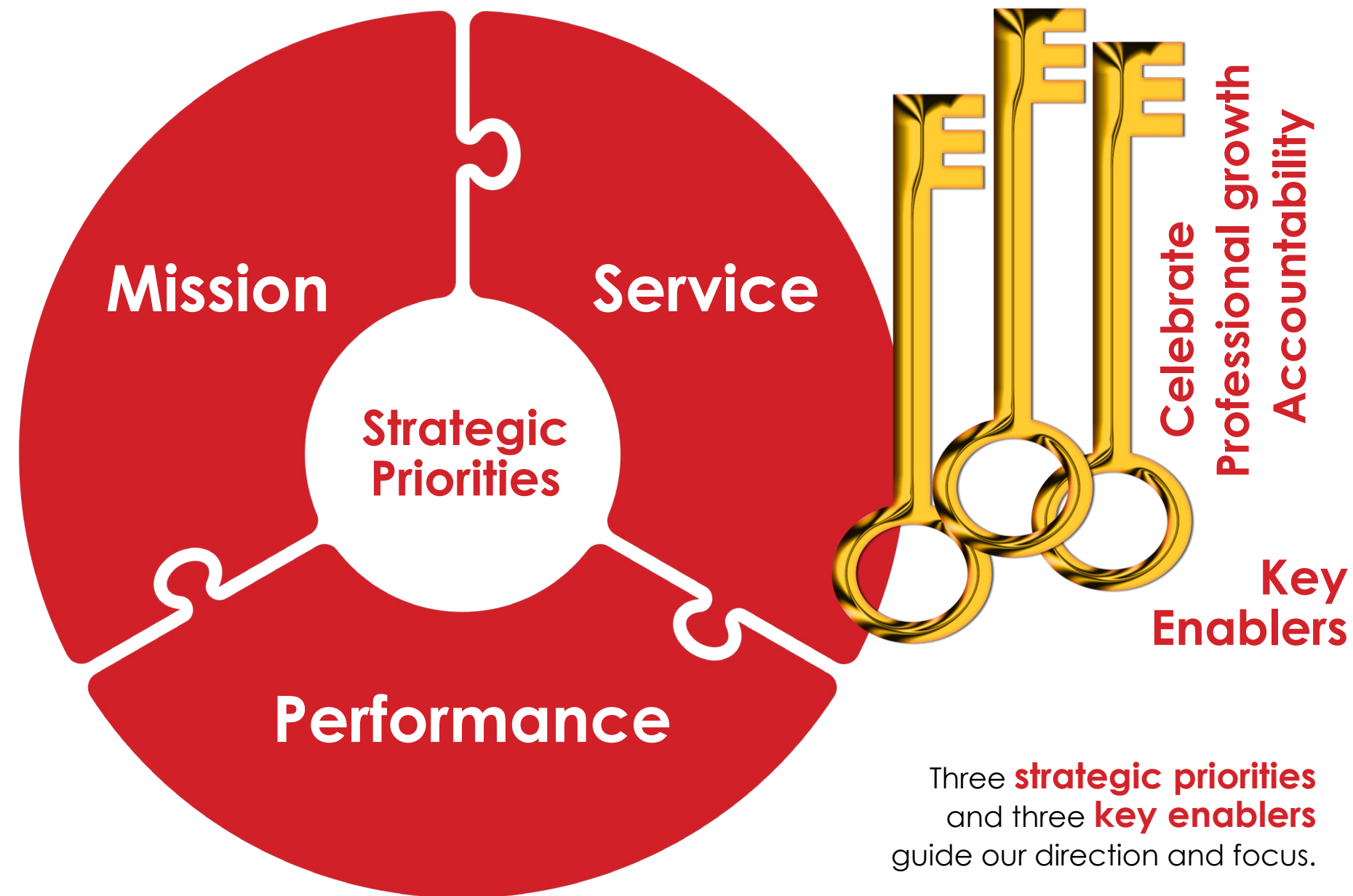
The Director of Catholic Education is the Executive Officer of the Catholic Education Commission.

The Catholic Education Commission meets up to seven times per year.

## 2023 members

Member	Position	Since
Archbishop Christopher Prowse	President	2013
Ms Gabrielle Sullivan	Parent Community Representative	2016 - July 2023
	Interim Chair	August 2023
Dr Patrick McArdle	Chair	2016 - July 2023
	Vicar for Education	July 2023
Mr Ross Fox	Executive Officer	January 2020
Mr David Austin	ACT Primary Principal Representative	2017
Ms Gaye McManus	NSW Secondary Principal Representative	September 2017
Mrs Frances Robertson	NSW Primary/Central Principal Representative	September 2017
Mr Michael Lee	ACT Secondary Principal Representative	January 2021
Ms Rachael Davies	Congregational Schools Representative	February 2022
Ms Selina Walker	Archdiocesan Parents Council Representative	2019
Mrs Karen Motyka	Parent/Community Representative	2016
Mrs Vanessa Gibson	Parent/Community Representative	2016
Mr Robert Johnson	Parent/Community Representative	January 2021
Asst Prof Darius von Guttner	Community Representative	June 2023
Dr Justine Molony	Parent/Community Representative	June 2023
Dr John Norgrove	Parent/Community Representative	June 2023
Mrs Tiffany Wallace	Executive Secretary	May 2017
Monsignor John Woods	Vicar for Education	2015 - July 2023





## Mission

**M**ission and faith formation is part of a lived experience and is an ongoing process. As such, Catholic Education Canberra Goulburn should continue to celebrate and communicate the strengths and opportunities that arise from the distinctive nature of learning and teaching in a Catholic context. Sustained focus on nurturing faith across the system will add to the sense of pride and community shared by all across the system and Archdiocese.

**Outcome: A strong and positive Catholic identity is evident in the ethos and culture of schools and early learning centres, religious education teaching and learning, and faith formation programs.**

- Developed a low-variance sample scope and sequence to enable the consistent delivery of the Religion Curriculum for Kindergarten to Year 10 (K–10) across Archdiocesan schools.
- In collaboration with staff at McAuley Catholic Central School in Tumut and St Anne's Central School in Temora, new low variance, knowledge rich units of work for Stage 6, Studies of Religion were co-constructed as part of the introduction of Stage 6 in both schools.
- Achieved an Archdiocesan first in delivering a combined Studies of Religion and Certificate II in Volunteering program to students at McAuley Catholic Central School and St Anne's Central School, providing a combined academic and vocational credential for regional students.
- Worked with NSW senior secondary colleges to improve the quality and standard of delivery of Studies of Religion I and Studies of Religion II. This involved increasing levels of engagement with HSC data and developing collaborative high-quality units of work that incorporate high-impact teaching strategies in all Studies of Religion classes in NSW, including the new classes in Tumut and Temora.
- Completed the first full year of implementation across all our early learning centres of the Early Years Religious Education Curriculum developed in 2022. This is improving the delivery of religious education specifically for children in the early years and promoting our early learning centres as true centres of Catholic faith and tradition.
- Introduced a CECG Youth Ministry Officer position for schools

### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

Strengthen Catholic identity across the system

implementing Catholic Schools Youth Ministry Australia programs. This has enabled a deepening of the peer-to-peer faith formation opportunities for students in the 13 participating schools.

- Funded 15 emerging leader early career teachers to attend World Youth Day in Lisbon in Portugal as an international formation experience in collaboration with the Archbishop. This has enabled these teachers to engage more fully in the faith life of the parish and to actively seek leadership opportunities.
- Developed a suite of high-quality staff spirituality formation programs which can be delivered by school leadership teams. These programs relieve the burden on schools of developing their own programs and provide a consistent, knowledge-rich approach across CECG schools which aligns with the formation programs being undertaken by principals, assistant principals and religious education leaders.
- Brought together teachers from across the Archdiocese for our Faith in Learning System Day in January, with a focus on integrating the Catholic faith and intellectual tradition with our evidence-based approach to teaching.
- Celebrated NAIDOC Week with a NAIDOC Week Mass preceded by a smoking ceremony, underlining the organic connection between Catholic identity and pride in culture. For the first time we also held regional NAIDOC Week Masses and smoking ceremonies in Moruya, Cootamundra, Tumut and Goulburn, which were well attended and received.
- Increased the number of students identifying as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander – from 860 in the August 2022 census to 900 in August 2023 – not only at enrolment but also among existing students, suggesting higher confidence in combining Catholic and cultural identities within our system.
- In collaboration with the CECG Parent Liaison Officer, developed parent-centred prayers and formation for school newsletters. This has resulted in a higher level of access for parents to materials that support their role as primary educators in the faith.



# Performance

An ongoing priority of the Catholic system is to continually improve student engagement and learning outcomes. A key lever for the system is to build the skills and accountability metrics of teachers and principals to focus staff efforts on what will make the biggest difference.

**Outcome: Every student achieves an aspirational measurable goal every year.**

- Improved student learning by training and coaching more teachers – reaching a total of more than 1000 by the end of 2023 – in high-impact teaching practice informed by the science of learning.
- Strengthened our evidence-based approach to reading and writing instruction by training more teachers – totalling more than 400 by the end of 2023 – in literacy instruction for years K–2, informed by the science of reading.
- Reached a total of more than 350 teachers trained in literacy intervention, thereby increasing our capacity to support students identified as requiring additional instruction in order to improve their reading outcomes.
- Finalised the implementation of the CECG Assessment Schedule to ensure effective monitoring of students' progress and assist teachers to access assessment data and use it to plan quality teaching and learning. In 2023 we achieved over 98 per cent completion rate of assessments.
- Increased the capacity for principals and school leaders to engage in leadership sessions and align their annual improvement plans with high-impact teaching practice.
- Implemented the Virtual Learning Collaborative across the Archdiocese to deliver senior courses in 10 schools and colleges, including regional central schools. This engaged over 30 students accessing courses previously not available to them.
- Extended St Anne's Central School in Temora and McAuley Catholic Central School in Tumut into Year 11, resulting in significant enrolment growth for both schools and providing them a K–12 pathway.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

Intensify the focus on improving student engagement and learning outcomes

- Extended curriculum offerings in vocational education beyond the requirements of secondary education, increasing opportunities for student engagement and achievement in vocational courses.
- Arranged an international study tour for CECG principals and system leaders to learn from England's experience of implementing evidence-based teaching and learning, school and system improvement, and effective models of teacher professional learning. As well as being an opportunity to share knowledge and practice between two countries, this initiative has supported long-term planning to embed and sustain practice change that improves student outcomes.
- Created broader collaboration opportunities for our teachers and school leaders to not only showcase their learnings and evidence-based practice in their classrooms but also cultivate extended communities of practice focused on improving student engagement and learning outcomes across Australia. CECG primary and secondary schools hosted teachers and leaders from other Catholic, independent and public schools in Victoria, South Australia, Queensland and Sydney.
- Supported the academic aspirations and cultural wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students through implementing students' Personalised Learning Pathways, which have both academic and cultural goals. This is part of a holistic approach to improving engagement and outcomes along with deepening cultural understanding.
- Supported knowledge sharing and professional development for our Contact Teachers for Aboriginal Education and our Aboriginal Education Workers, including through twice-yearly network meetings.
- Increased our cultural competency as an organisation through the Online Cross-Cultural Competency Course delivered by the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council, which everyone in the Catholic Education Office has now completed.

# Service

Catholic Education comprises a range of passionate and devoted staff and stakeholders. To enhance each person's contribution towards strengthening student engagement and learning outcomes and Catholic identity, the Catholic system must further clarify and clearly articulate each group's role.

**Outcome: Everyone in the Catholic Education community understands their responsibilities, accountabilities, and how they contribute to success and wellbeing of students.**

- Built the capacity of teachers to implement direct instruction programs and identify and use quality curriculum resources in their schools. To assist with this, we provided curriculum scope and sequences and units of work for effective English and mathematics instruction in K–6 classrooms.
  - Continued to build on knowledge of the theory and practice of high-impact instruction by providing online professional learning modules for primary and secondary teachers.
  - Provided key personnel in schools with additional professional learning about attendance issues. This has helped to clarify roles and responsibilities and improve understanding of attendance from both compliance and wellbeing perspectives.
  - Delivered a three-day Developing Culturally Safe and Responsive Schools professional development program open to all CECG employees, to help empower all staff to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and families and create a safe and supportive environment.
  - Enabled staff to share on-Country experiences to increase their understanding of the importance of culturally inclusive learning.
- Outcome: Further engage parents in student learning and wellbeing.**
- Provided sessions for parents at CECG schools to develop their understanding in areas such as how to support children to develop effective reading strategies.
  - Supported and promoted Catholic School Parents Archdiocese

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

Clarify how everyone contributes to the growth and wellbeing of students

Canberra and Goulburn (CSPACG), to increase awareness of its role and strengthen the connection between CECG and families.

- Supported CSPACG representatives to attend local, state and national parent organisation meetings, ensuring that CECG parents have a voice at every level of Catholic education.
- Increased representation on the CSPACG Council by including members from every CECG region. This means that all parts of the Archdiocese now have an authentic voice on the council.
- Continued to provide input from parents and carers through the CSPACG Council to the Catholic Education School Board and Community Council Review. The intention is to build a more contemporary parent-school community council model with a strong advisory role for parents and carers.
- Promoted CECG initiatives and strategies for families to engage with their child's learning. In 2023 we convened two Family Forum events, at which guest speaker Andrew Fuller, clinical psychologist, talked about how parents can identify and build their child's learning strengths to maximise their learning. The number of registered participants was substantially higher than for the 2022 Family Forum, and the feedback following the presentations was overwhelmingly positive.
- Strengthened relationships with school boards and community councils by supporting schools and parent bodies to facilitate family engagement activities within their school community. This included discussions at the school level about what family engagement is, why it matters and how best to implement it. The intended outcome is more organic, authentic and sustainable involvement of families, leading to better student wellbeing and learning outcomes.
- Developed a new strategic plan for the CSPACG Council to provide direction and accountability. The council has endorsed the plan and is using it as the basis for developing a 2024 work plan. The strategic plan engages members more closely in delivering the council's objectives – advocacy, leadership, representation and support – and facilitates progress tracking.



## Celebrate

For Catholic Education to attract the best staff and deliver the best outcomes, the system must be seen as a highly desirable destination.

Catholic Education should focus on promoting itself as a compelling choice in an authentic and values based manner and further clarify its value proposition to employees. This will strengthen the system's ability to meet its core mission.

**Outcome: Catholic Education schools and early learning centres are a compelling choice to current and potential students, families and staff.**

- Provided a K–12 Catholic pathway for two regional communities through the Stage 6 expansion of St Anne's Central School, Temora and McAuley Central School, Tumut. These communities have supported and embraced the academic opportunities now available to them locally.
- Produced a video Creating Futures and Building Pathways about the new offering of virtual learning for Year 11 and 12 students across CECG schools to explain to prospective teachers and students the benefits of virtual learning.
- Celebrated 100 years of Catholic education at St Mary's Primary School in Batlow NSW with a video marking the centenary celebrations.

- Produced a video of Faith in Learning for Evangelisation and Catalyst to be used as a professional development tool for teachers. This is a part of the System Day content for schools for 2024.

- Reached prospective parents with a video about considering a Catholic education for their child as part of the 2023 enrolment campaign.

- Produced videos for Trinity Catholic Primary School in Murrumburrah and the St Francis of Assisi Early Learning Centre to show parents the high-quality offerings in these communities.

- Promoted the value of a Catholic education and our offering of excellence in teaching and learning through the System Day on 30 January 2023, with national print and TV coverage of keynote speaker Noel Pearson.

- Promoted Catholic education through social media and news media – for example, articles in The Australian and The Canberra Times about the outstanding gains in NAPLAN results in CECG schools.

- Reached national audience of 1.8 million viewers with ABC national news reporting on CECG's Catalyst program through the 7pm news bulletin, AM current affairs program and ABC online.

- Earned media coverage for CECG recruiting a record number of early career teachers into

### KEY ENABLER 1

Promote Catholic Education as a compelling choice for students, families and staff

our schools with our professional development for teachers as key benefit.

- Secured media coverage of CECG's highly accomplished and lead teachers and the success of a Churchill Fellowship for Senior Officer Literacy Specialist Jessica Colleu-Terradas.

- Promoted in the print and radio news the professional development for CECG principals gained through a tour of high achieving schools in England.

- Highlighted the use of wellbeing dogs to support students with ABC national news reporting on TV and online.

- Established the St Francis of Assisi Early Learning Centre in Calwell (ACT) to meet the need for high-quality childcare in the core community served by St Francis of Assisi Primary School. The new centre will open in 2024.

- Used reform funding from the ACT Government for early learning in line with the intentions to support families with fees, increase educational quality, and retain early learning teachers. This has contributed to improvements in all three areas:

- o Provided fee relief for families by returning the usual resource levy to all parents
- o Established the new leadership position of Dynamic Director, whose role is to work with educational leaders in our early

“ Catholic Education should focus on promoting itself as a compelling choice in an authentic and values based manner. ”

learning centres and improve the delivery of education in early learning; this has resulted in the development of skills and knowledge and the sharing of best practice resources through the Lead Educators' Network.

- o Increased pay rates for our early learning centres staff, which not only helped with retention of early learning teachers but also showed our appreciation of the work they do.

- Worked with and supported schools on strategies to improve attendance and increase responsiveness to emerging attendance issues. This involved increasing schools' understanding of the attendance policy and providing resources on, for example, how to talk with parents about attendance. We refined the language we use to communicate about the issue, including more effective catchphrases to use in newsletters and social media.



Carroll College, Broulee





## KEY ENABLER 2

Cultivate and extend talent and leadership

Catholic Education's people are the engine that drives the system forward. To advance Catholic Education's ambitious agenda, the system requires the right people in the right places with the right skills. An increased focus on talent and leadership is necessary in order to achieve this.

**Outcome: Catholic Education's workforce is highly skilled with strong leadership engaged in student learning.**

- Engaged leading national and international experts to deliver world-class professional development activities for teachers and school staff at the CECG-wide Faith in Learning System Day in January 2023.
- Expanded our Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers (HALT) and HALT Assessors network across the ACT and NSW, making it one of the largest networks of accredited and aspiring HALT teachers in Australia.
- Built understanding of the Catalyst program among parents and carers through regular articles celebrating its successes and videos highlighting expert teacher practice.
- Provided a compelling choice for teacher engagement in high-impact instruction across the Archdiocese through the Catalyst program supporting the teacher as the most important learner in our system, accompanied by over 110 hours of accredited professional learning opportunities.
- Achieved recognition of excellence for our

vocational education and training students through the NSW Training Awards in the Vocational Education and Training in Schools – Student of the Year category, with students competing in the Riverina, Illawarra and South Coast regions. Our winner from the 2022 Illawarra and South Coast region co-hosted the 2023 awards.

- Engaged with the Teacher Quality Institute (TQI) to pilot a sponsorship of 10 professional accreditation hours for staff from four of our schools (two primary and two secondary, totalling 300 staff), recognising System Supported Professional Learning in Catalyst. This successful pilot has been endorsed by the TQI Board and has been tabled as a success with the Minister for Education in the ACT.
- Collaborated successfully with the University of Canberra to develop micro-credentialled units within the university's Master of Teaching degree for CECG staff to complete with their High-Impact Teaching Practice secondary training. Fifty-two CECG staff undertook these units in 2023.
- Hosted more than 50 visits from people outside the system with an interest in what Catalyst has done to improve teacher knowledge and practice, and in turn improve student outcomes.
- Continued to embed and grow teacher capacity in high-impact instruction through regular school visits and coaching opportunities to assist leaders and school staff.

# Professional growth

- Continued to develop a stronger understanding of the value of vocational education and training by providing training in vocational education to staff.
- Conducted widespread cultural competency training for the first time. Feedback from teachers indicates that it has raised their awareness and is something they continue to think about and apply in their teaching practice.
- Delivered professional development activities with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander focus at CECG Leadership Day events at the start of each term – the first year we have done so every term.
- Integrated our People Strategy with Catalyst to create synergistic effects. By attracting, retaining, engaging and supporting the wellbeing of our workforce, with our people at the heart of all we do, we are ensuring we have the right people in the right roles to raise the bar in education through Catalyst. At the same time, Catalyst is increasing the engagement and job satisfaction of our workforce by increasing efficacy and delivering better student outcomes.

## People Strategy – implementation

- Formally launched our People Strategy at Faith in Learning System Day 2023. The strategy is designed to achieve long-term sustainability and growth of the CECG workforce, aligned with and underpinned by our Catholic culture and identity.

- Implemented a range of programs and initiatives across the system aligned to the People Strategy, with significant results.

## People enabler 1: Attract and recruit the right people

### Initiative: Casual engagement

- Addressed system-wide staffing shortages by establishing a built-in casual relief workforce. After reviewing our use of casual staff and conducting a trial across seven schools, we extended the initiative to employ casual relief teachers on a full-time basis to provide relief wherever needed. This has particularly benefited regional schools.
- Improved communication between our casual workforce and CECG by providing regular relevant information to casual employees (around a quarter of our workforce) via the email newsletter Casual Connect, first distributed in March 2023.

### Initiative: University partnerships / initial teacher education

- Conducted a targeted national graduate recruitment campaign, following the successful first year of the program in 2022. This has resulted in 25 graduates (to date) confirmed to enter the workforce with CECG in 2024.
- Took a prominent place as one of the key sponsors for the 2023 Tertiary to Work careers fair in April 2023.



- Collaborated with the University of Canberra to create a framework for engaging students as teachers, where the students are in their final year of an initial teacher education (ITE) program but have not yet completed all professional experience and assessments. By the end of 2023, around 13 ITE students had participated in this initiative. We now have the same arrangement in place with the Australian Catholic University. Partnering with universities in this way enables us to engage prospective teachers early and bring them into our mentoring and development structure from the start of their career.

#### **Initiative: Targeted recruitment initiatives**

- Implemented a recruitment campaign with employment opportunities advertised in every Australian capital city, targeted to Australian Defence Force (ADF) spouses. This was informed by analysis of new starter data which indicates that 25 per cent of teachers relocating to Canberra have done so because of an ADF spouse posting.
- Provided financial assistance to teachers for relocation interstate to take up a role with CECG.
- Provided financial incentives for recruitment to rural and remote teacher positions.

#### **Initiative: Alternate teacher supply pipelines**

- Engaged 13 Youth Ministers, most of them ITE students, to commence with CECG in 2023. This followed a review of the position description and role requirements of Youth Ministry positions.

#### **People enabler 2: Engage and retain our people**

##### **Initiative: Develop effective governance arrangements**

- Continued to change the profile of our workforce by converting large numbers of temporary teachers from contract arrangements to permanency, giving staff and principals greater certainty. As at December

2023 we have achieved this for almost half of the eligible positions and are on track to complete the initiative in 2024. CECG began this process two years before the introduction of the Fair Work Legislation Amendment (Secure Jobs, Better Pay) legislation, coincidentally ensuring our compliance with the fixed-term contracts provisions of the Act, which came into effect on 6 December 2023. This process has seen the number of permanent teaching staff at CECG increase by 300 since July.

- Offered casual to permanent conversion for large numbers of non-teaching staff and made a review of casual employee status an ongoing requirement after 12 months' service. Most CECG positions are now advertised as permanent.

- Completed the implementation of registration compliance management in our Employee Self-Service (ESS) system. Staff can now enter details of all the registrations they hold, and ESS will track and remind them about impending registration renewals. By the end of 2023, this function had been rolled out to all CECG staff.

#### **Initiative: Teacher engagement**

- Provided additional benefits to employees, including improved annual leave provisions, increased support staff remuneration, recognition of service for support staff, and additional release (non-teaching) time. These benefits are additional to our Enterprise Agreement obligations; they demonstrate the value we place on our staff, their career progression and their wellbeing.

#### **Initiative: Enterprise bargaining**

- Successfully negotiated a new Enterprise Agreement to cover school staff, agreed to in November 2023 and submitted to the Fair Work Commission for approval. We provided the agreed benefit increases before the Enterprise Agreement was finalised, to ensure we remain a competitive employer.

#### **People enabler 3: Grow and develop our people**

##### **Initiative: Flexible Futures Program**

- Successfully implemented the Flexible Futures Program, a leadership relief initiative that provides short-term coverage for principals going on leave by retired former CECG principals, ensuring minimal disruption and improved stability in these specific and hard-to-fill positions. The program was used by seven schools, providing relief for a total of 204 days in 2023.

##### **Initiative: Values and behaviours**

- Launched a revised Code of Conduct for CECG staff in early 2023. This is part of our initiative to develop signature behaviours and values underpinned by our Catholic identity and culture.

#### **People enabler 4: Prioritise the health, safety and wellbeing of our people**

##### **Initiative: Health, Safety and Wellbeing Program centralisation**

- Centralised the coordination of delivery of flu shots to CECG staff, thereby reducing the administrative burden and coordination required at school level. We have selected a new provider for 2024, enabling more flexible access for regional schools, including the ability for staff to source their vaccination from pharmacies as an alternative to onsite vaccination sessions.

##### **Initiative: Flourish: People Wellbeing Program**

- Launched the new Flourish initiative, which gives CECG employees a choice of wellbeing (employee assistance) providers, has increased the hours each day when they can access assistance, and provides the option to use online chat or a mobile app to talk with a provider. We initiated these changes in response to staff feedback about limited access to employee assistance.



St Thomas Aquinas ELC,  
West Belconnen





St Joseph's Primary School, Bombala

# Accountability



## KEY ENABLER 3

Use data to inform decision-making and to drive performance

Catholic Education is fortunate to obtain a significant amount of data from a wide variety of sources. Used, adeptly, this data will help the system to glean insights into the core problems it aims to solve in its quest to improve student outcomes. This requires the system to both develop a systematic plan to leverage data across the system and increase the focus on data literacy.

### Outcome: CECG's decision-making is informed by data.

- Supported schools to develop robust processes for collecting and storing accurate data in line with the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on the numbers of students with disability and the adjustments they receive. We use this data to inform decisions about adjustments for CECG students with disability.
- Initiated a new project using data analysis of student attendance patterns as the basis for measures to increase attendance. While it is too soon to draw meaningful conclusions from the data collected to date, schools have begun to note individual improvements for particular students. We are separately examining data on attendance for children with disability and for children at risk.
- Analysed our student suspension data as the basis for revising our suspensions policy to ensure we continue to demonstrate best practice and to align with the Education Amendment Act 2022 (ACT), and provided education and scaffolding resources for schools to use in considering suspension. CECG has seen a definite decrease in the number of suspensions as a result of this work.
- Collected data, using the Tell Them From Me survey tool, on students' and teachers' attitudes regarding religious education. This is a longitudinal data project, starting in 2021, that will enable us to examine attitudinal trends – for example, in the share of students and the share of teachers with a positive regard for religious education – which will inform decisions about how we design and deliver religious education courses.
- Learned from the findings of the 2022 Catholic School Parents Australia Parent Survey of Student Wellbeing and Learning, in which parents cited

wellbeing as being as important as, if not more important than, student learning. These findings guided CSPACG's strategic approach.

- Provided opportunities for all senior secondary colleges to engage in data analysis of HSC Studies of Religion (in NSW) and BSSS Religion AST (in the ACT) data to inform improved practice.
- Used data to make informed decisions to tailor attraction, recruitment, engagement and onboarding strategies through the implementation of engagement surveys and exit interviews.



Mt Carmel Primary School, Yass



ACT schools

Suburb	School	Principal	Year level	ELC	Primary	Secondary
Amaroo	Good Shepherd Primary School	David Austin	K - 6		763	
Aranda	St Vincent's Primary School	Lina Vigliotta	K - 6		190	
Braddon	Merici College	Anna Masters	7 - 12			821
Calwell	St Francis of Assisi Primary School	Sean Rutledge	K - 6		475	
Campbell	St Thomas More's Primary School	Luke Donnelly	K - 6		162	
Charnwood	St Thomas Aquinas Primary School	Leah Taylor	P - 6	57	321	
Conder	St Clare of Assisi Primary School	Matthew Egan-Richards	K - 6		505	
Curtin	Holy Trinity Primary School	Philippa Brearley	P - 6	58	372	
Evatt	St Monica's Primary School	Lisa Harris	K - 6		390	
Florey	St John the Apostle Primary School	Matthew Garton	K - 6		351	
Florey	St Francis Xavier College	Sandra Darley	7 - 12			1209
Garran	Sts Peter and Paul Primary School	Cameron Johns	K - 6		310	
Gowrie	Holy Family Parish Primary School	Kate Markcrow	P - 6	143	569	
Griffith	St Clare's College	Ann Cleary	7 - 12			1060
Harrison	Mother Teresa Primary School	Carmel Macguire	P - 6	84	701	
Holder	St Jude's Primary School	Cameron Reed	P - 6	71	411	
Isabella Plains	St Mary MacKillop College	Michael Lee	7 - 12			1989
Kaleen	St Michael's Primary School	Judy Egan	K - 6		190	
Kambah	St Thomas the Apostle Primary School	Ursula Jamieson	K - 6		307	
Narrabundah	St Benedict's Primary School	Rachel Smith	K - 6		137	
Nicholls	Holy Spirit Primary School	Julie Wiley	P - 6	113	733	
Nicholls	St John Paul II College	Catherine Rey	7 - 12			936
O'Connor	St Joseph's Primary School	Cameron Tarrant	P - 6	53	312	
Page	St Matthew's Primary School	Graham Pollard	K - 6		343	
Pearce	Sacred Heart Primary School	Anne Staines	K - 6		195	
Red Hill	St Bede's Primary School	Andrew Casey	K - 6		221	
Wanniassa	St Anthony's Parish Primary School	Erin Marmont	P - 6	57	389	
Waramanga	St John Vianney's Primary School	Peter Rodda	K - 6		136	
Watson	Rosary Primary School	Greg Walker	K - 6		366	
Total Archdiocesan schools				636	8849	6015
Dickson	Daramalan College	Rachel Davies	7 - 12			1477
Griffith	St Edmund's College	Joe Zavone	4 - 12		185	668
Pearce	Marist College	Matthew Hutchison	4 - 12		437	1356
Total Congregational schools				0	622	3501

NSW schools

Suburb	School	Principal	Year level	ELC	Primary	Secondary
Adelong	St Joseph's Primary School	Kirsty Beavan	K - 6		41	
Batemans Bay	St Bernard's Primary School	Johanna Wain	K - 6		356	
Batlow	St Mary's Primary School	Jannine Richards	K - 6		29	
Bega	St Patrick's Primary School	Jo Scott-Pegum	K - 6		183	
Bombala	St Joseph's Primary School	Susan Tighe	K - 6		67	
Boorowa	St Joseph's Primary School	Mark Birks	K - 6		72	
Braidwood	St Bede's Primary School	Marylou Gorham	K - 6		142	
Broulee	Carroll College	Jacqueline Heffernan	7 - 12			524
Cooma	St Patrick's Parish School	Frances Robertson	K - 10		265	126
Cootamundra	Sacred Heart Central School	Nicky Trinder	K - 10		218	138
Crookwell	St Mary's Primary School	Sarah Lowe	K - 6		152	
Goulburn	Sts Peter and Paul Parish Primary School	Kathy Neely	K - 6		294	
Goulburn	Trinity Catholic College	Gaye McManus	7 - 12			607
Goulburn North	St Joseph's Primary School	Matthew Mullins	K - 6		314	
Grenfell	St Joseph's Primary School	Louise Grant	K - 6		42	
Gundagai	St Patrick's Primary School	Christine Baron	K - 6		93	
Lake Cargelligo	St Francis Xavier Primary School	Jacinta Elwin	K - 6		53	
Moruya	St Mary's Primary School	Noeleen O'Neill	K - 6		184	
Murrumburrah	Trinity Catholic Primary School	Caz Perryman	K - 6		36	
Pambula	Lumen Christi Catholic College	Shane Giles	K - 12		182	533
Queanbeyan	St Gregory's Primary School	Tiffany Reedy	K - 6		649	
Temora	St Anne's Central School	Grant Haigh	K - 10		146	95
Tumut	McAuley Catholic Central School	Eamonn Moore	K - 10		185	200
West Wyalong	St Mary's War Memorial School	Phillip Nielsen	K - 6		116	
Yass	Mt Carmel Central School	Michael Green	K - 6		296	
Young	St Mary's Primary School	Peter Hughes	K - 6		246	
Young	Hennessy Catholic College	Kathy Holding	7 - 12			436
Total NSW schools				0	4361	2659



# 2023 School statistics

Data from August 2023 Census for schools and February 2023 Census for early learning centres

19,623  
ACT  
enrolments

7,020  
NSW  
enrolments

### ACT Archdiocesan schools

- 24 primary
- 5 secondary
- 29 total

### ACT congregational schools

- 2 primary and secondary (4-12)
- 1 secondary
- 3 total

### Total students by classes (Archdiocesan schools only)

ACT primary schools									
Class	ELC	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Total	636	1183	1285	1332	1318	1265	1231	1235	9485
ACT secondary schools									
Class	7	8	9	10	11	12			Total
Total	1171	1170	1125	1084	778	687			6015
NSW primary schools									
Class	ELC	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Total	0	648	642	615	663	566	609	618	4361
NSW secondary schools									
Class	7	8	9	10	11	12			Total
Total	558	550	513	463	325	250			2659

### Total number of students

	ACT	NSW	Total all schools
ELC	636	0	636
Primary	9471	4361	13,832
Secondary	9516	2659	12,175
Total	19,623	7020	26,643

### Student breakdown Archdiocesan schools only

Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students			
	Primary	Secondary	Total
ACT	251	172	423
NSW	303	174	477
Students with disability			
	Primary	Secondary	Total
ACT	2181	1488	3669
NSW	1074	605	1679
Catholic students			
	Primary	Secondary	Total
ACT	4804	3282	8086
NSW	2139	1273	3412
Teachers employed Full-time equivalent, Archdiocesan schools only			
	Primary	Secondary	Total
ACT	543	457	1000
NSW	314	241	554
TOTAL			1554
Support staff employed Full-time equivalent, Archdiocesan schools only			
	Primary	Secondary	Total
ACT	157	168	325
NSW	112	74	186
TOTAL			511

54%  
49%





# Faith in Learning Staff Excellence Awards

## HALT Award Recipients

**Amanda Knott** St Mary MacKillop College, Tuggeranong

**Danielle Madsen** St Michael's Primary School, Kaleen

**Elizabeth Goodsell** St Francis Xavier College, Florey

**Emma Young** Holy Family Primary School, Gowrie

**Jacinda Vaughan** St Monica's Primary School, Evatt

**Jessica Hallahan** St Michael's Primary School, Kaleen

**Laura Frogley** St Monica's Primary School, Evatt

**Leah Malpas** St John Vianney's Primary School, Waramanga

**Stephanie Williams** St Mary MacKillop Catholic College, Tuggeranong

## HALT: Year 10 Recertification

**Kathleen Garvie** St John Paul College, Nicholls

## Parent/Carer Award

**Katherine O'Sullivan** St Monica's Primary School, Evatt

**Lisa Bauer** Holy Trinity Primary School, Curtin

## School Office Staff Award

**Janine Hickson** St Mary MacKillop Catholic College, Tuggeranong

## School Classroom Support Award

**Karli Johnson** St Francis Xavier Primary School, Lake Cargelligo

**Sharon Thorpe** St Francis Xavier Primary School, Lake Cargelligo

## Early Career Teacher Award

**Zachery Bladwell** Trinity Catholic College, Goulburn

## Primary Teacher Award

**Kate Wigg** St Gregory's Primary School, Queanbeyan

**Angela McDonald** St Thomas Aquinas Primary School, West Belconnen

## Secondary Teacher Award

Virtual Learning Team

## Mission Award

**Catherine Howe** St Patrick's Primary School, Gundagai

**Melanie Stratford** St Joseph's Primary School, O'Connor

## Leadership Award: Emerging Leader

**Jacinta Housler** St Thomas the Apostle Primary School, Kambah

## Leadership Award: Middle Leader

**Kate Goolagong** St Mary MacKillop Catholic College, Tuggeranong

## Leadership Award: School Leader

**Gaye McManus** Trinity Catholic College, Goulburn

**Maria O'Donnell** St Mary MacKillop Catholic College, Tuggeranong

## Director's Award: Early Learning Centre

Staff at St Anthony's Early Learning Centre, Wanniasa

## Director's Award: Catholic Education Office

**Jessica Colleu Terradas** CE Office, Manuka

## Director's Award: Student Care

**First Responders** Carroll College, Broulee

## Director's Award

Staff at St Joseph's Primary School, Bombala

## Archbishop's Award

**Jacinta Elwin** St Francis Xavier Primary School, Lake Cargelligo









**CATHOLIC EDUCATION**  
Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn